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AUTHOR Kenzel, Elaine; Williams, Jean
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ABSTRACT

A guide for a quinmester course designed to help students identify how various types of paragraphs are developed and to provide experience in composing a variety of both oral and written paragraphs is provided. The guide presents performance objectives, course content, teaching strategies, and lists of student and teacher resources. (DB)

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AUTHORIZED COURSE OF INSTRUCTION FOR THE QUINMESTER PROGRAM

DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Language Arts: PARAGRAPH BUILDING 5111.04
5112.04
5113.04
5114.04
5115.04
5116.04

English

CS200055

DIVISION OF INSTRUCTION • 1971

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PARAGRAPH BUILDING

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English

Written by Elaine Kenzel
and
Jean Williams
for the
DIVISION OF INSTRUCTION
Dade County Public Schools
Miami, Florida
1971

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COURSE TITLE: PARAGRAPH BUILDING

COURSE DESCRIPTION: A course designed to help students identify how various types of paragraphs are developed and to provide experience in composing a variety of both oral and written paragraphs.

I. Performance objectives

A. Provided with a hypothetical situation, students will generate ideas for a paragraph.

B. Utilizing results of a brainstorming session or a small group mode, students will synthesize a logical sequence of related thought.

C. Given a printed essay, an editorial, or a news column, students will identify existing topic sentences.

D. Presented with a jumbled paragraph, students will isolate the topic sentence.

E. Given a variety of subjects, students will develop a specified number into topic sentences.

F. Using their own topic sentences or ones selected from a list, students will elicit from their own experiences specifics for supporting evidence.

G. Given a printed essay, an editorial, or a news column, students will identify whatever building devices are used to construct each paragraph.

H. Using selected stimuli, students will determine the appropriate form for expression.

I. Having determined the appropriate form for an original idea or a selected one, students will develop it according to that form.

J. Using original ideas or ones selected from a list, students will attempt to formulate various types of paragraphs: exposition, narration, persuasion, and argumentation.

II. Course content

A. Rationale

The purpose of this course is to translate ideas into paragraph form. Although all individuals think and have feelings, some are not able to delve into themselves, draw out their responses, and give them written form. In order to help students generate this kind of readiness to record impressions and to encourage those who already have identified their thought, the process of invention will be the first consideration.

Following this investigation of how an individual discovers what he thinks, students will proceed to utilize the other components of the composing process (logical ordering, strategy, and style) to experiment with a variety of paragraph types. If the above procedure is valid, students will be able to move independently from invention to completed paragraph.

B. Introductory material

The structural components of the composing process include invention, logical ordering, strategy, and style. These are essential to the development of a paragraph which attains the objective of lucid communication.

Invention concerns the generation of ideas. This arises from observation (factual and impressionistic), perception, discernment, and insight. Once an idea has been isolated, it must have complementary building elements for support or expansion.

After examining a variety of building devices (definition, illustration, comparison, contrast, cause, effect, explanation, space flow, time flow), students select the method best suited to develop a particular idea. This determination, coupled with the inclusion of transitional devices, leads to unity, coherence, and the desired emphasis in each paragraph. Such a sequence comprises the ordering process.

By considering the variables of voice, tone, and attitude the writer evaluates the paragraph developed thus far to determine

the probable effect it will have upon the reader. If he concludes that the content of this material and his manner of presentation is not effective for the audience he has identified, he will change his strategy. An individual's choice of words and the conscious techniques he employs to achieve his desired effect produce a style unique to him. This expression of his personality is the final element of the composing process.

Although the above concerns the specifics of paragraph building, a presentation of this structure before students have had many opportunities to write paragraphs may result solely in a feeling of confusion or frustration. Instead, proceed inductively by having students feel, think, talk, write, talk, think, feel, write, etc., until they experience a freedom of communication. Then they are ready to look at the principles and identify them.

III. Teaching Strategies

These activities for oral and/or written expression are designed for use with individual students, small groups, or large groups unless specified for a particular group.

A. Present students with stimulus material for thought. This may include one or more items selected from the following experiential sensors:

Sight - single object, tray of items, collage, symbol, picture, film, filmstrip, loop film, slide(s)

Hearing - birds, traffic, conversation, silence, records, tapes, cough, sneeze, wind, bell

Taste - watermelon, chocolate candy, pepper, strawberry ice cream, cloves, grapefruit, mashed potatoes, ginger ale

Smell - jasmine, smoke, pine needles, freshly cut grass, shaving lotion, incense, salt water, gasoline, burned toast

Touch - cold macaroni, metal, wire brush, velvet, water, ice, sand, a cat, piece of chalk, feather

Emotion - fear, happiness, surprise, revulsion, uneasiness, apprehension, satisfaction, hate, love, isolation, warmth, optimism, bewilderment

Memory - experiences (primary and secondary)

Using the stimulus as a starting point, have students list ideas suggested by it or discuss their thoughts about it to recognize the potential within them to generate ideas from their total environment.

B. Put several items (paper clip, marshmallow, nut shell, cold macaroni) into a bag. Have each student feel the contents of the bag without looking inside. They are then to name the items, describe the feel of each, and identify the sensation aroused by each.

C. Have students look at a picture, slides, a filmstrip, a film, or a film loop such as "Color All Around Us." After they view it, ask them to identify all their observations. Discuss these and have students note the variety of responses. A second showing may reveal how much students did not see the first time.

D. Have students imagine that half the room is filled with soft drink cans. Ask them to list in five minutes all of the things they could do with the cans or make with them.

E. Ask students to imagine that someone very close to them has been away for three months and is returning today via train. While the student is eating breakfast, he hears on the radio that the train has been derailed and many are believed killed or seriously injured. At that moment the phone rings. Have students describe their feelings from the time of the announcement to the actual picking up of the receiver.

F. Give students a situation similar to the following: from the street you see a human figure tottering on the ledge of the seventeenth floor of a high rise apartment building. Have students brainstorm and from the items suggested ask them to select those which can be related and to develop these into a sequential pattern by time, space, or logic.

G. Show students the film loop "The Party: Ordering Sequences." Have them first order the sequences chronologically and then

have them determine other possible patterns of arrangement. They should be able to explain how the different arrangements would affect the outcome of the story and how each ordering pattern might influence the reader.

E. Have available numerous copies of disposable magazines. Give students a list of topics and ideas or have them select their own. Ask them to choose pictures which portray some aspect of their theme and to arrange their selections in a manner that will reveal an identifiable progression of thought.

I. Ask students to describe their ride or walk to school this morning, being sure to discuss the events in the order in which they happened.

J. Give students a situation similar to the following: An individual suddenly becomes hungry for a hamburger. There is ground beef in the refrigerator. List every action necessary to prepare a hamburger for consumption.

K. Give students several selected paragraphs, some of which contain a topic sentence and some of which do not. Ask them to read the paragraphs and decide what makes some clearer than others. This method leads students inductively to discover the idea that topic sentences are useful for stating the essence of the paragraph.

L. Give students a set of sentences, some of which concern generalizations and some of which deal only with supporting details (specific examples, a definition, a cause or effect, a comparison or contrast, or items of proof.) Have them identify those which could be used as topic sentences.

M. Use the SRA acetates on "Contemporary Composition."

N. Give students a jumbled paragraph and have them rearrange the sentences. One possible method is to use the following formula for a paragraph as a guide:

$TS + D_1 + D_2 + D_3 + CS$ (Topic sentence + detail one + detail two + detail three + clincher sentence.)

O. Use one of the previously described methods for invention to have students generate a subject and then state it as a

topic sentence. Extend this, then, to include the listing of supporting elements. In addition, depending upon the progress of the students, they may focus their attention on the manner in which they have ordered the material, the strategy they have used, and their style. If any of these do not contribute to the desired intent of the writer, students should experiment with a rearrangement of the components.

P. Have students condense selected paragraphs by stating each as a ten-word telegram. This summarization should reveal the controlling purpose of the paragraph.

Q. Give students a selection of topic sentences and have them state orally or in writing the content of an imagined paragraph.

R. Use an acronym as a device for helping students remember the steps of building a paragraph. HELPS

H unt a subject

E voke reader response

L imit the scope of the subject

P lan the unity

S teer the subject with the topic sentence

S. Give students a variety of situations such as: What would you do or how would you feel if:

You discover that your telephone is bugged?

As an employee you discover that you are under constant observation via your employer's one-way window?

You see someone stealing your wallet and are unable to prevent it?

You see smoke coming from an apartment building?

You witness a three car collision?

You observe a bird build a nest?

You were born and reared in New York City and are now spending a week on a ranch?

You see your best friend in a fight with someone who constantly spreads falsehoods about you?

You observe a family picnicking at the beach?

You see a young couple holding hands?

You see an elderly person evidencing signs of childishness?

You ran out of gas half way across Alligator Alley?

You had to survive a night alone in the Everglades?

Your car stalled in the middle of a seven-way intersection?

Have students select one of these and determine which type of paragraph (expositon, narration, persuasion, or argumentation) would lend itself to the most effective presentation of the subject. Ask them then to select elements to support the idea and develop these into a paragraph. Have students repeat this activity to gain experience with these four paragraph types.

T. Have students write the various types of paragraphs.

1. Argumentation

   a. Suggest that students choose an area of controversy and present their stand on it. To gain practice in handling point of view they could take the opposite stand.

   b. Have students express in what ways they agree or disagree with one of the following statements: The literature of a people is its mirror; This is the last married generation; Education should be compulsory through grade fourteen.

2. Persuasion

   a. Convince your parents to buy you a new car, to remove the curfew, to get you a private telephone, or to give you a charge account with no limit on it.

   b. Cite an incident of student unrest at a college. Using only the facts presented, students are to write five versions of the situation, running the gamut from ultra-radical, semi-radical, neutral, semi-conservative, to ultra-conservative.

3. Narration

   a. Recall the most pleasant, the most frightening, the most surprising, or the saddest experience of your life and describe it.

   b. Characterize the person who has impressed you most.

4. Exposition

   a. Explain a process, an idea, or an object.

   b. Note the relationships between Abraham Lincoln and John Kennedy, Jules Verne and the Apollo mission, or Leonardo da Vinci and modern equivalents of his ideas.

U. Have students read numerous essays, editorials, and news columns to become familiar with the shape, form, and content of paragraphs (to develop an intuitive sense of paragraphs). For this use books such as Contemporary American Prose, Ideas in Prose, The Literary Heritage series, the newspapers and magazines. (See resource section for additional suggestions. In addition, have students watch television editorials and listen to editorials on the radio.

IV. Student Resources

A. State-adopted textbooks

Creating Clear Images
Writing: Unit Lessons in Composition Series
Composition: Models and Exercises Series
Writing Creatively
Developing Ideas
New Dimensions in English
Modern Grammar and Composition Series
The Lively Art of Writing
Studies in Nonfiction
The Literary Heritage Series
Currents in Nonfiction
Designs in Nonfiction
American Experience: Nonfiction
English Tradition: Nonfiction

B. Non-state-adopted supplementary materials

1. Textbooks

The Oregon Curriculum/A Sequential Program in English Language/Rhetoric Series (Kitzhaber, Love. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.)

The Five-Hundred-Word Theme (Martin. New York: Prentice Hall)

Selections from the Black College Reading Skills, The Olive Book, The Brown Book, The Purple Book. (Spargo. Providence, Rhode Island: Jamestown Publishers)

English Grammar and Composition Series (Warriner. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World)

Modern Composition (Stegner, Sauer, Rummel. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.)

The Effective Theme (Stegner and Sauer. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.)

Diction and Style in Writing (Altick. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.)

Success in Writing 1, 2 (Steward and McKinney. Menlo Park, California: Addison-Wesley Co.)

Developing Writing Skills (West. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.)

The Dynamics of Language (Glatthorn, Kreidler and Heiman. Lexington, Massachusetts: D. C. Heath and Company)

2. Reference materials

Learning to Write in College (Smith. Boston: D. C. Heath and Company)

Nonfiction I (Baum. New York: The Macmillan Company)

Nonfiction II (Baum. New York: The Macmillan Company)

Contemporary American Prose (Wachner, Ross, Van Houten. New York: The Macmillan Company)

Ideas in Prose (Fidell. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall)

Stop, Look, and Write! (Leavitt and Sohn. New York: Bantam Books)

A Reading Approach to College Writing (Cox. San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Company)

Modern Rhetoric (Brooks & Warren. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company)

Writing Prose Techniques and Purposes (Kane and Peters. New York: Oxford University Press)

Composition of the Essay (Hyde and Brown. Menlo Park, California: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company)

From Black Africa (Wells, Stevenson, King. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, Inc.)

A Book of Nonfiction - 1 (O'Malley and Cianciolo. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc.)

A Book of Nonfiction - 2 (Cianciolo and O'Malley. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc.)

Man in the Expository Mode (Solotaroff, Editor. Evanston, Illinois: McDougal, Littell & Company)

Better Paragraphs (Ostrom. San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Company)

Planned Paragraphs (Webster. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Educators Publishing Service)

Composition Book 1 (Hickman. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Educators Publishing Service)

Composition Book 2 (Hickman. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Educators Publishing Service)

3. Periodicals

Available current magazines and newspapers.

4. Media resources

See Teacher Resources C through F.

V. Teacher resources

A. Textbooks

Writing College Themes (Doremus. New York: Oxford University Press)

Developing Writing Skills (West. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.)

B. Professional books and periodicals

A Guide to English in Florida Secondary Schools (Bulletin 35 A, 1962)

Teaching English in High School (Bernstein, Abraham, New York: Random House, Inc., 1962)

The English Language Arts in the Secondary School (NCTE Curriculum Series. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1956)

Language Arts Behavioral Objectives (Flanagan/Mager/Shanner. Palo Alto, California: Westinghouse Learning Press, 1971)

The Teaching of High School English (Hook, J. N. New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1967)

Language Arts Guide Composition and Language Study for Junior HighSchool (Bulletin 6-H. Miami, Florida: Dade County Public Schools)

Written Composition Grades 10-11-12 Language Arts Guide (Bulletin No. 6G Tentative. Miami, Florida: Dade County Public Schools)

Teaching Language, Composition, and Literature (Fowler. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company)

C. Films

1-01208 "Writing a Good Paragraph"
1-30024 "Sense Perception (The Limitations of the Senses)" (Part 1)
1-30025 "Sense Perception (The Limitations of the Senses)" (Part 2)
1-30153 "Style in Writing"
1-01152 "Building Better Paragraphs"
1-30151 "From Sentence to Paragraphs"
1-00556 "Something to Write About"
1-01209 "Better Choice of Words"
1-00182 "Developing Imagination"
1-01216 "Do Words Ever Fool You?"
1-30718 "Gateways to the Mind" (Part 1)
1-30719 "Gateways to the Mind" (Part 2)
1-02334 ""Glory of Spring"
1-00178 "How to Judge Facts"
1-00707 "Reading Improvement: Comprehension Skills"
1-10657 "Seasons"

1-01181 "Why Punctuate?"
1-01742 "American Time Capsule"
1-11682 "Discovering Color"
1-14011 ""Pigs!"
1-13784 "Punctuation: Mark Your Meaning"
1-13849 "A Short Vision"
1-10378 "Your Amazing Mind"
1-01170 "Your Communication Skills: The Exchange of Ideas"

D. Audio Tapes

"Thought the Foundation of All Communications" (National Center for Audio Tapes, Bureau of Audio Visual Instruction, Stadium Building, Room 320, University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado 80302)

"Using Our Senses" (National Center for Audio Tapes)

E. Loop Films

Models for English Composition Series (Ealing Corporation, 2225 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, Massachusetts 02140)

"Beach Rescue"

"Behind the Wheel"

"Who They Are"

"Clay" (Ealing Corporation)

F. Transparencies

"Contemporary Composition"

2-30053 Unit 2, Lessons 2 and 3
2-30055 Unit 4, Lessons 6 and 7
2-30056 Unit 5, Lessons 8 and 9
2-30063 Unit 12, Lesson 24